

TOWN OF DARIEN PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION

SOLAR PANELS INFORMATION FORM AND CHECKLIST

Why should I consider installing solar panels on my residential property?

The State of Connecticut is encouraging municipalities to promote clean solar energy, and the Town of Darien fully supports this initiative. The Darien Zoning Regulations recognize roof mounted solar panels as an accessory use allowed by administrative Zoning and Building Permits (no Public Hearing needed). The administrative permit process has been streamlined and all solar panel applications receive an expedited review from the Planning and Zoning Department, usually within 1-3 days.

What application forms and materials are needed for a permit for roof mounted solar panels?

The Licensed Solar installer/contractor needs to submit: the regular Zoning and Building Permit application forms; with three copies of a map or aerial photo highlighting the location of the proposed panels; and the application fee of \$110 — a check made payable to the “Town of Darien.” This is the standard zoning permit processing fee for construction projects valued at \$79,999 or less — larger valued projects have a higher application fee.

The application needs to include a structural engineer’s verification that the roof will support the panels, and three copies of the technical literature about the brand, model and layout of the solar panels, the Spec sheets and a schematic design of the support equipment such as transfer switches, inverters, etc.

What permits are required for ground-mounted solar panels on my residential property?

According to the Town of Darien Zoning Regulations Section 405d, ground-mounted solar panels require a Special Permit. The ground-mounted system must:

1. Not exceed 15 feet in height or diameter, including all supporting structures;
2. Not be located within any required front yard for a principal structure;
3. Be fully screened from any adjacent property line and the street line;
4. Be permanently anchored in compliance with the State Building Code; and
5. Be supplemented with technical literature.

This system will require review and action by the Planning & Zoning Commission at a public hearing.

What permits are required for installing solar panels on my commercial/business property?

If the solar panels will be roof mounted and concealed by a parapet wall or other existing screening material, the application can be processed by the staff. Submit the regular Zoning and Building Permit application forms along with three copies of a map or aerial photo highlighting the location of the proposed panels and the application fee, which varies depending on the value of the project. The application needs to include a structural engineer’s verification that the roof will support the panels, and three copies of the technical literature about the brand, model, and layout of the solar panels, the spec sheets, and a schematic design of the support equipment such as transfer switches, inverters, etc. If the solar panels will be visible from the street or nearby properties, then the application will need to be reviewed by both the Architectural Review Board and the Planning and Zoning Commission.

CHECKLIST:

For roof-mounted panels on residential properties:

- Zoning and Building Permit application form;
- Three copies of the maps or air photo, plans, and technical literature;
- Structural engineer certification;
- Application fee.

For ground-mounted panels:

- Planning & Zoning Commission application form;
- Copies of the maps or air photo, plans, and technical literature;
- Structural engineer certification;
- Application fee.

For roof-mounted panels on commercial/business properties:

- Zoning and Building Permit application form;
- Three copies of the maps or air photo, plans, and technical literature;
- Structural engineer certification;
- Application fee.

For more information on solar panels, please contact or visit the Planning and Zoning Office:

Darien Planning and Zoning Office
Town Hall Room 211
2 Renshaw Road
Darien, CT 06820
656-7351
8:30-4:30 M-F

For further information on the Building Code Regulations regarding solar panels, please contact or visit the Building Department:

Darien Building Department
Town Hall Room 212
2 Renshaw Road
Darien, CT 06820
656-7347
8:30-4:30 M-F

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